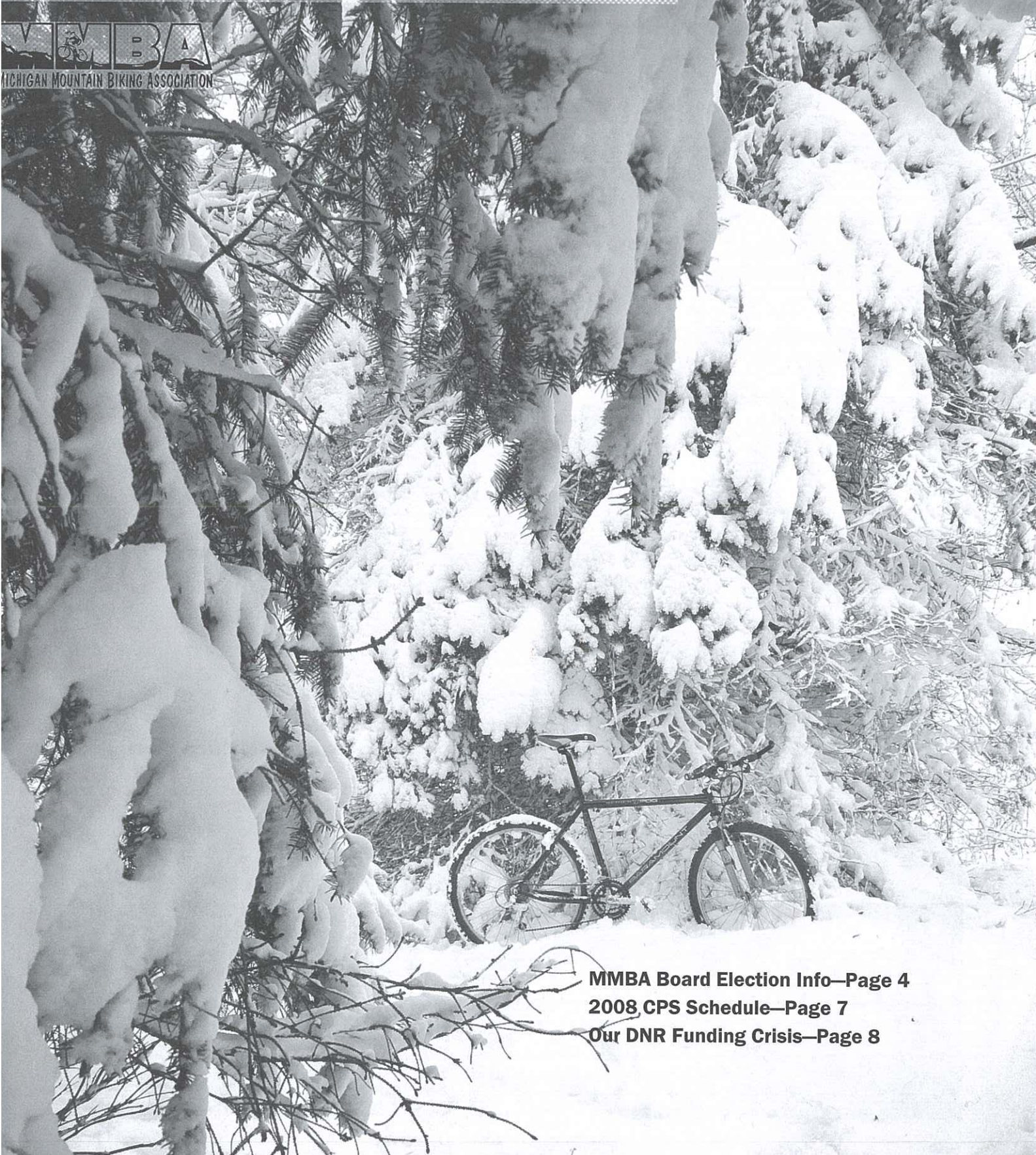


WINTER 2007 Issue No. 82

BENT RIM BUGLE

THE OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE MICHIGAN MOUNTAIN BIKING ASSOCIATION



MMBA Board Election Info—Page 4
2008 CPS Schedule—Page 7
Our DNR Funding Crisis—Page 8



**Michigan's Premier Grassroots
Mountain Bike Racing Series**

CPS

**Championship Point Series
Schedule**

**The CPS raises funds to directly support ongoing
MMBA advocacy work and trail improvements**

Sunday, April 20th
Yankee Springs Western Chapter
Benefit - TT

Sunday, May 4th
Fort Custer Southwest Chapter
Benefit - XC

Sunday, June 1st
Hanson Hills Challenge - XC

Saturday, July 12th
Boyne Challenge - Marathon XC
*Double rider points will be
awarded!*

Sunday, July 27th
Stony Creek - TT

Saturday, August 23rd
Maybury Metro South Chapter
Benefit - XC

Sunday, September 21st
**Addison Oaks Metro North Chap-
ter Benefit - XC**

Sunday, September 28th
Pando Challenge - XC

More information:
www.MMBA.org or CPS@MMBA.org



Your trails, your backyard
Supported by you and the MMBA



GARY FISHER



The Michigan Mountain Biking Association (MMBA) is a 501-(C)(3) non-profit organization. We have 1,600 members in nine chapters throughout Michigan. The mission of the MMBA is to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users. The Bent Rim Bugle is published four times a year (March, June, Sept, Dec.) by the Michigan Mountain Biking Association and distributed to all members. It is made possible by volunteers and riders like you.

Bent Rim Bugle

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Visit the MMBA on the web at:

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BRB Information

The Bent Rim Bugle (BRB) began over 15 years ago. Back then, the Michigan DNR was on the verge of closing all state land to mountain bikes. The BRB was the means for organizing the state's off road cyclists to work for continued access.

Today the BRB still carries the torch for off road advocacy, it has become the official newsletter of the MMBA. Published quarterly, the BRB keeps the MMBA membership up to date on what's happening throughout the State.

Contributing articles, artwork, and photos

If it's about mountain biking, please send it in. Electronic submissions should go to brb@mmba.org. We prefer documents in Microsoft Word, or simple text. Photos should be in jpg format and at least 300 dpi. We can't promise everything will get published, but we'll do our best. For more information on how to submit contact brb@mmba.org

Advertise in the BRB

The Bent Rim Bugle offers inexpensive and targeted advertising which helps with the cost of producing this cool newsletter.

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Contact us at brb@mmba.org for more info and ad rates.

Additional Copies

Additional copies of the BRB can be purchased for \$3.00 each, based on availability. Contact brb@mmba.org.

November 2007 Membership Report

| Chapter | Current Memberships | Change Since Last Issue | | Change Since One Year Ago | |
|--------------|---------------------|-------------------------|-----------|---------------------------|-----------|
| Holly/Flint | 80 | 1 | 1% | -32 | -40% |
| Metro North | 293 | 18 | 6% | | |
| Metro South | 337 | -5 | -2% | | |
| Mid-State | 90 | 1 | 1% | 2 | 2% |
| Northeast | 30 | -1 | -4% | 1 | 4% |
| Northern | 64 | -4 | -6% | 2 | 3% |
| Potawatomi | 250 | -3 | -1% | -17 | -7% |
| Southwest | 132 | 2 | 1% | 14 | 10% |
| Western | 197 | 7 | 3% | 32 | 16% |
| Total | 1530 | 24 | 2% | 14 | 1% |

Cover photo by: Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

President's Report

The off season, aka winter. A mixed blessing here in MI. Although it keeps most of us off our bikes, it allows us to pursue other important things.

Recently I have been reminded that we mountain bikers are perceived along a broad spectrum. MMBA members know that in general mountain bikers are naturalists and stewards. All you have to do is throw your energy bar wrapper on the ground and you'll see proof of this. But the same is true if a fellow mountain biker were to cut down a tree or disturb a nest. Nature is where we enjoy our sport, and protecting it is our primary goal.

What really struck me is the recent example of when a Person of Consequence made the statement "I thought mountain bikes were motorized users". This spoke to me. The MMBA is coming up on our 20 year anniversary and we still struggle to be recognized consistently as the user group we truly are. But I guess the bright side is that the MMBA won't be out of a job any time soon.

The Shingle Mill Pathway situation is a perfect example. I was proud of the MMBA's ability to come together as a unified voice to contest the bad decision of closing one of our best trails to bicycles. A case in point to the strength of our numbers. Yes we are good stewards who have logged countless hours of trail work, but the larger point was missed: The symbiosis between all a given trail's user groups. Would the hunters really be better off if trail work ceased ten months out of the year? Would the hikers be safer on trails that went days or weeks without use?

We still have a lot of people to educate on our mission - *to promote responsible mountain biking and to work toward the goals of common land access and natural resource protection through interaction with policy makers, the cycling industry, race promoters, mountain bikers and other trail users.* All of our members should know these words and more importantly should spread our mission to everyone they can. You never know who's mind you might change.

-Bill Mayer

2007 MMBA At-Large Board Member Election Information

At each year's MMBA Annual Meeting & Expo, the membership will vote in 4 At-Large Members of the MMBA Board of Directors. The MMBA State Board is made up of these At-Large Board Members, as well as one Representative from each Chapter.

As a group, board members are in charge of establishing a clear organizational mission, forming the strategic plan to accomplish the mission, overseeing and evaluating the plan's success, ensuring financial solvency of the organization, interpreting and representing the community to the organization, and instituting a fair system of policies and procedures for human resource management. This is accomplished through 4 Quarterly meetings per year, and regular e-mail discussions.

As an MMBA member, you have the opportunity to select these At-large board members. Below is an overview of how this is done:

RUNNING/NOMINATION PROCESS

By the time you read this, Nominations and candidate selection should have been made. Please see the "MMBA News" Forum at mmba.org for information.

GETTING CANDIDATE INFORMATION

Two weeks prior to the Feb 10 annual meeting, information on the candidates will be posted on the "MMBA News" Forum in the Forums section of the mmba.org. This will allow the MMBA membership to get an understanding of the candidates.

VOTING PROCESS

You can vote in person at the Annual Meeting & Expo or by Proxy:

1) At the Annual Meeting: all MMBA members will receive a ballot when they sign in. Votes are tallied and winners are then announced at the end of the meeting.

2) By Proxy- mail or fax in a 'ballot' as described below.

To vote by fax: Fax the above to: 248-488-3905. When faxing, please send an e-mail to simse@ntcna.nissan-usa.com to indicate that a fax has been sent.

To vote by mail: Send the above: Emil Sims 15563 Merion Ct. Northville, MI 48168.

The "ballot" for fax/mail must be a piece of paper that has:
names of up to 4 candidates
Voter's name printed
Voter's name signed.

The name of the voter is required in order to prevent this person from voting again at the annual meeting.

Any questions, please contact me at simse@ntcna.nissan-usa.com. Hope to see you at the Annual Meeting & Expo!

A True Friend of Conservation

By Todd Scott

I'm sad to report that Sam Washington passed away on the morning of October 10, 2007.

Sam was a longtime leader with the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC) and had served on their board and as their executive director. He also served on various committees including the Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund and the Citizen's Committee for Michigan State Parks.

"He dedicated a great deal of his life to working for Michigan's natural re-

sources and its outdoor heritage," said Dennis Muchmore, the current MUCC executive director. "He cared very deeply about the future of the outdoors in Michigan and about his MUCC family. The conservation community has lost a friend."

Sam knew one heck of a lot about Michigan natural resources, parks, recreation, the history and more. As it was said during his memorial services, "Sam held court." When he spoke, you took notes. He told it like it was – straight, to the point, and not afraid to play devil's advocate.

I learned quite a bit from him. In fact I would make a conscious effort to sit next to Sam at various meetings in hopes of not missing his comments and

to have the opportunity for follow up questions.

I also enjoyed his colorful sayings that were often used to bring a discussion back to reality. My favorite was, "That'd be like teaching a pig how to sing; it's a waste of time and it annoys the pig."

I am so very thankful to have worked with him.

"Sam will be genuinely missed," said Dr. Chuck Nelson from MSU. "He was a true friend of conservation."



MDOT honored for leadership role in GreenWays Initiative in Southeast Michigan

Contact:
Bill Shreck, Director of Communications,
517-335-3084
Agency:
Transportation

November 30, 2007 -- A 100-mile network of non-motorized trails and greenways in southeast Michigan has been honored by the Federal Highway Administration. Michigan Department of Transportation (MDOT) Director Kirk T. Steudle accepted the award for "exceptional environmental stewardship" at the Nov. 29 State Transportation Commission meeting in Lansing.

"This award reflects our commitment to making non-motorized trails available

as a transportation mode," said Steudle. "Trails are a part of the transportation mix that is essential to protecting the health and well being of Michigan residents, and greenways contribute to enhancing quality of life."

The Southeastern Michigan GreenWays Initiative is a public and private partnership that has worked since 2001 to develop and finance a 100-mile network of greenways involving more than 75 municipalities in Wayne, Oakland, Macomb, Monroe Washtenaw, St. Clair and Livingston counties.

Greenways provide recreation, transportation, education, conservation, water quality, tourism and economic benefits by creating non-motorized trails in developed areas, while nurturing and preserving green space and providing trails in undeveloped areas.

The GreenWays Initiative of the Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan is a comprehensive effort aimed at expanding and enhancing the natural landscape of Southeast Michigan. An initial privately donated \$25 million has been used to leverage

over \$82 million in investments by public and private sources.

The Community Foundation for Southeastern Michigan and the Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance were co-recipients of the award, which speaks to the collaborative nature of the project, said Steudle. MDOT has been a partner since the planning phase in 1995, which was funded by federal transportation enhancement activity funds, and state planning and research program funds, he noted.

A GIS database was developed, based on input from a broad range of partners in each county, to document potential corridors, natural areas, land uses, existing public parks and preserves and trails/greenways. The Michigan Trails and Greenways Alliance, formerly the Rails to Trails Conservancy, played a large role in identifying the corridors.

"This is a great example of how a public/private partnership can make a significant difference in the lives of many citizens," said Steudle.

From the Desk of the Executive Director



The past few months have been very busy and exciting. The board and I are working hard to make the MMBA a better organization to be a strong voice for our membership through the education at our trail school, the revitalization of our membership committee and creating guidelines for new

chapters to become apart of the MMBA. Here are just a few other things that we are working on:

Advocacy:

Shingle Mills Update: The MMBA state level and board banded together for this proposal. The bike ban at The Shingle Mill Pathway was a good catalyst for our members, and thank you to the nearly 500 people that signed our petitions. DNR Director Rebecca Humphries, did not pass an immediate ban and is forming workgroups and input sessions for the user groups of the trail.

In a meeting with top DNR officials on Dec 7th, the MMBA asked to not only be on the workgroup but more enhanced access to other committee and workgroups in the future.

For any other advocacy information please contact our Director of Advocacy Jason Jones. advocacydirector@mmba.org

Governmental Affairs:

DNR Park Funding Update: In response to the threat of up to 37 parks slated to close in 2009, a resolution for a \$9 license registration fee to be assessed in lieu of the \$24 motor vehicle and boating pass. The resolution comes from a DNR citizens advisory group and is modeled after a successful Montana structure. A \$9 will be charged when registering your vehicle with an optional opt out at a later time.

The next hurdle is to introduce and get it passed through the legislators, this resolution needs our support and strongly recommend you contact your local legislators to express your support on keeping our parks funded.

"I am hopeful that it will pass," John Gonway, MMBA Director of Governmental Affairs said. "A lot of Michigan residents get value out of those parks, but our largest worry is that this will be seen as a tax."

More updates and information will be available on the web-

site, and for any other governmental affairs issue, contact our Director of Governmental Affairs John Gonway, dga@mmba.org

Grants and Sponsorships

REI Trail School Grant: The trail school gets a facelift. This summer REI generously approved a grant for \$4500 for more tools and books for the MMBA/REI trail school. The trail school is in place for members and non-members to learn how to build multi-use sustainable trail based on the IMBA standards. Stay tuned for a check presentation ceremony. To learn more about the trail school and/or to become involved contact Marne at execdir@mmba.org.

Additional grants and funding opportunities are also being researched and acted on. If you would like to pass along a suggestion, please e-mail me at execdir@mmba.org.

Marketing and Communications

Don't do trail work? Envious of your fellow riders when they show off their Ed Berta's First Across The Finish Line Awards? There are many other opportunities to be involved with the MMBA and avoiding manual labor. We are in need of dedicated folks to meet a few times a month and work with board members on projects with membership, marketing, and programming.

Bike Shop Program: A larger presence in bike shops through employee promotions, marketing literature, and poster. Recruit new members and develop easy-to-use mechanisms for bike shops to sign up members. We need 3-5 people, with vary skills of graphic designs, communications, bike shop knowledge

Revamp sponsorship literature: Develop new sponsorship levels for corporate and affiliate members. We need 2-3 people motivated people.

Website workgroup: Update website and increase usability We need 2-3 web programmers and a graphic designer

Chapter marketing in a box: Outline items and marketing tools each chapter could use to reach their membership better. We need 3-5 motivated people.

Don't know where you fit? Don't have any skills? No problem, contact Marne at execdir@mmba.org and I will point you in the right direction.

Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will take place on February 10th at will once again be at the Springfield Oaks County Parks. The schedule is as follows

7:30- Exhibitor Halls opens for setup
9am- Blizzard Blaster Ride at Pontiac Lake
10-1pm Bike Swap Meet
10-1pm Expo area officially opens
1-4pm Annual meeting

Expo booth space will be available starting Jan 1st, if you are interested contact Marne at execdir@mmba.org And check back at the main page for any other updates.

As I have set foot out as the MMBA's newest representative I have been reminded repeatedly the MMBA is a well respected organization. I have met with other non-profits, legislators, committee boards and we are constantly commended on our trail work, our website, our enthusiasm, our commitment and more. We are not just people who ride bikes, we are people who care about the environment's sustainability, trail access, and other user groups. We are a viable user group showing our strengths on issues like the Shingle Mill Pathway, and a group I am proud to represent.

Thank you to those who have built the MMBA to what it is today, and I look forward to taking us to the next step.

-Marne Smiley

2008 MMBA Championship Point Series Schedule

Mark your calendars now.....don't miss Michigan's premier grassroots racing series! We are pleased to announce the 2008 MMBA Championship Point Series schedule:

Sunday, April 20th
Yankee Springs Western Chapter Benefit - TT

Sunday, May 4th
Fort Custer Southwest Chapter Benefit - XC

Sunday, June 1st
Hanson Hills Challenge - XC

Saturday, July 12th
Boyne Challenge - Marathon XC
Double rider points will be awarded!

Sunday, July 27th
Stony Creek - TT

Saturday, August 23rd
Maybury Metro South Chapter Benefit - XC

Sunday, September 21st

Addison Oaks Metro North Chapter Benefit - XC

Sunday, September 28th
Pando Challenge - XC

You'll need five races to qualify for the annual Series award and your best five races count toward your overall Series rankings.

We're bringing back your favorite trails and shaking things up a bit more in 2008.....so come out and have fun with us! Bring your family, your friends, race to have a good time and support the MMBA and your local trails.

Our primary goal is to bring the value of the MMBA CPS - back to the racers, their families and back to the trail. To this end the 2008 race schedule will continue to help raise much needed funds for trail advocacy. Money generated by the Chapter Benefits will directly fund ongoing MMBA advocacy work and trail improvements.

Your trails, your backyard - all supported by you and the MMBA.

Contact the MMBA at cps@mmba.org or visit www.mmba.org

State Parks Funding Recommendation

The following funding recommendation was adopted by the Citizens Committee for Michigan State Parks on November 28, 2007.

The Citizen's Committee for Michigan State Parks recommends that:

- The existing Michigan state park resident motor vehicle permit (\$24 annually; \$6 daily) be eliminated.
- The existing Michigan boating access site permit (\$24 annually; \$6 daily) be eliminated.
- An annual "State Park, Boating Access Site and Forest Recreation Passport" fee be assessed to access all 98 state parks and recreation areas, including 5 state park trails, 1,007 boating access sites managed by the DNR, and the state forest campground and pathway system. Camping fees will still

apply at all Michigan state park and state forest campgrounds.

- The fee would be a \$9 charge per annual vehicle license plate/registration, and \$4.50 per motorcycle plate/registration on all Michigan Secretary of State registered passenger vehicles and motorcycles. This fee would be in addition to current vehicle registration costs. There would be a refund provision following the license plate/registration purchase for those who certified they did not want to support Michigan's outdoor recreation system and would not be visiting any of the above-mentioned facilities.
- That the fee be adjusted annually for inflation based on the Detroit Consumer Price Index (CPI), with 2008 being the base year.
- That the revenues realized from this approach be divided as follows (once the \$11 million lost from resident sales of state park motor vehicle permits, and \$1 million from sales of Michigan boating access site permits, is replaced and

the Secretary of State is allocated 1% of all revenues for administering this program):

- 50% state park operations
- 30% state park capital improvements
- 10% local unit, matching development grants
- 7% state forest campground and pathway system operations and capital improvements
- 3% DNR cultural and historic park resources capital improvements and operations

- Retain the non-resident state park motor vehicle permit (\$29 annually; \$8 daily) requirement.
- This recommendation be conveyed to the Governor, the Natural Resources Commission, and the Legislature for appropriate action in order to be implemented prior to October 1, 2008. The complete resolution and supporting information is available on-line at www.m-bike.org/dnr

Our DNR Funding Crisis

By Todd Scott

And a proposed solution to keep our parks and trails open

Continued cuts to the DNR budget have pushed us to a point where it's starting to hurt real badly.

There are other DNR funding issues too. The Legislature has passed a bill that would spend the Michigan Civilian Conservation Corps \$20 million savings account to pay down the state's deficit. Currently the interest on that account provides \$1 million a year to the DNR to pay for park stewardship and maintenance work.

Another major issue involves the hunting and fishing license fees. So far, the Legislature has refused to raise these license fees to cover increased DNR

"The Legislature also must come up with some way to provide relief for the state's superb park system. It's one of the biggest and best in the country, but it is falling apart because it's broke and can no longer afford to keep up even with daily maintenance."

**Eric Sharp, Detroit Free Press
Outdoors Writer**

costs. Without the increase, the DNR Wildlife division has begun laying off conservation officers and cutting major wildlife management programs.

And it should be noted that since Fiscal Year 2005, the DNR has reduced its programs by more than \$20 million.

just 8 trails which hopefully can be groomed by volunteer groups and grant funding.

Closing 37 State Parks

The number of park closures is really an estimate based on average park revenues and the anticipated deficit in state

| | Funding Problem | Result |
|--------------|---|--|
| June 2007 | \$75,000 is cut from the 2007 state forest recreation funding | Closed 20 state forest campgrounds |
| October 2007 | \$423,200 is cut from the 2008 state forest recreation funding | Closing 50 state forest campgrounds Ceasing maintenance on all forest trails Stopping XC ski grooming on 16 trails |
| October 2008 | \$5.3 million dollar deficit in the state park funding primary due to zero taxpayer support | Approximately 37 state parks will be closed possibly starting as early as April 2008 |

Eliminating Forest Trail Maintenance

There are sixty-six state forest pathways in Michigan that provide a combined 880 miles of non-motorized trail. All but two of those are open to mountain biking. This includes some incredible trails such as the High Country Pathway, VASA, and many portions of the North Country Trail.

Each year the DNR hires seasonal employees that are responsible for much of the daily work on these forest trails as well as 143 state forest campgrounds, including the cleaning of toilet buildings and trash pick up.

There used to be 50 seasonal staff employees doing this work across the state. Ten were cut in 2007. A substantial number will be cut for 2008 as a result of a \$423,200 cut to the DNR recreation funding budget.

Also, according to the Director office, this budget cut forces the DNR to close 30 campgrounds in addition to the 20 that were closed during the summer.

As for XC skiing, 16 trails that the DNR groomed in the past will not be groomed this winter. Their parking areas won't be plowed either. That leaves

park funding. The final closure number may be higher or it may be lower.

There is no list of parks that would be targeted for closure, though parks that don't make money would be the most likely candidates. Unfortunately, most of those money-losing parks are in the Southeast Michigan area, especially those without strong camping revenues (e.g. Pontiac Lake, Bald Mountain.) State parks along Michigan's west coast traditionally bring in significant campground revenue and effectively subsidize those parks around Metro Detroit.

While the budget deficit hits in Fiscal Year 2009 (October 1st, 2008), some park closures may start as early as April. The problem is the DNR may be unable to hire seasonal employees in April while full-time DNR employees are laid off. (Currently, DNR Wildlife employees are being laid off due to the state legislature not supporting hunting and license fee increases.)

How did we get to this deficit? Nearly all state parks across the U.S. receive some taxpayer funding. Michigan state parks have not had taxpayer support since 2004. At that time, money that was supposed to cover major capital

repairs (e.g. roads, buildings) had to be diverted to cover just the parks' day-to-day operations. Our park financial situation is like a fall-line trail down a hill. It might hold up for a little while, but eventually it's going to erode away.

Looking for Solutions

Given the current state budget situation in Lansing, asking for funding from our legislature is a non-starter.

Instead, our Citizen's Committee looked at what other states have done. We wanted a solution that spread the cost among residents as well as non-residents. We wanted a solution that would put this DNR funding issue to bed for this generation as well as those in the future. We didn't want to revisit this again nor burden future generations.

We considered a ballot issue, but the costs associated with them (millions of dollars) and their success rates (very low) made it not worth taking a chance.

We wanted a solution that didn't have many enemies. These days every group in Lansing is guarding their state monies. It's unrealistic to think we could sneak money away from schools or corrections.

But most importantly, we wanted a solution that had a chance for success in

this economic and political environment. This is no time to put your bet on a losing horse.

Choosing a Solution

Among all the state solutions we looked at, Montana's rose to the top. It added a fee to all personal vehicle registrations and eliminated state park entrance fees, which saved park money. They also allowed vehicle owners to ask for a refund if they did not intend to use the parks.

Out-of-state park users would still need to purchase an annual or one-day pass. And, this proposal makes enforcing these purchases much easier since the DNR park personnel only need to check vehicles with out of state plates.

We modified the solution to also provide adequate funding for our state forest recreation trails and campgrounds. It would be difficult to applaud keeping state parks open while forest trails and campgrounds were closed.

Similarly, the solution provides much-needed grant match money to support local park development.

And while there may be suggested tweaks and improvements, it's hoped that all park and trail groups will simply unite behind this solution since that is a necessity for its success and time is running out.

Solving the Crisis

Of course we haven't solved anything yet. Our proposal is simply a proposal. It has been forwarded to the Natural Resource Commission, the Governor's office, and our legislature.

WE NEED YOU TO CONTACT YOUR LEGISLATORS AND ASK THEM TO SUPPORT THIS PROPOSAL!

There has never been a more important time for park and trail users to contact their State Senators and State Representatives. We need to get this proposal written into legislation, passed by the House and Senate, then signed by the Governor – and preferably get this done by April.

Visit www.m-bike.org/dnr for more information on how you and your friends can make a difference.

Todd Scott is a former executive director for the MMBA. He is a member of the Citizen's Committee for Michigan State Parks and the Recreational Trails Program Advisory Committee.

How to Contact your State Legislators

One easy solution is to visit www.m-bike.org/dnr. This web page has information about the resolution and links for finding your Senator and State Representative. It also includes a sample email, sample letter and plenty of supporting information.

You don't need to write anything elaborate. Any contact in support of this proposal is a help as long as it is constructive.

If you have the time, feel free to share with your legislators how important these parks and trails are for you or your family. How would these closures affect you?

Don't wait. Call or email now!



Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

Columbus County Park

By Jason Schneider

Tuesday, November 27th Team Sandbag and the MMBA attended the public visioning session for Columbus County Park in Columbus Township, MI. The meeting was an information gathering session that encouraged St Clair County residents to share opinions on the development of the proposed park.



Mark Brochu of the St. Clair County Parks & Recreation Commission with Nick Shue and Team Sandbag members

The St Clair County Parks and Recreation Commission currently has over 92 acres purchased for the establishment of Columbus County Park, with an additional 291 acres currently held by the Trust for Public Land. They expect to finalize the purchase of the final portion sometime in December, using a \$1.4 million Michigan Natural Resources Trust Fund grant. In total, the park will have over 383 acres of land, partially bisected by the Belle River.

Landscape architect Pamela Blough, who has been contracted to develop the park master plan, polled the meeting attendees for potential uses for the future park. Many good suggestions were given, including both singletrack mountain bike trails and a paved walking/biking path. The Parks and Recreation Commission plans to compile all these suggestions into a preliminary plan and hold another public session in late January.

The possible addition of new singletrack is great news for residents of St Clair and Macomb counties. TSB and the MMBA will continue to stay involved in the planning process.

Stony Creek Skills Park

By Marty Shue

Volunteers in the Metro North area have stepped up to the plate this fall and completed the first big feature for the Stony Creek Skills Park - The Pump Track. It took a couple of months worth of evenings and weekends, lots of backbreaking shoveling, raking and

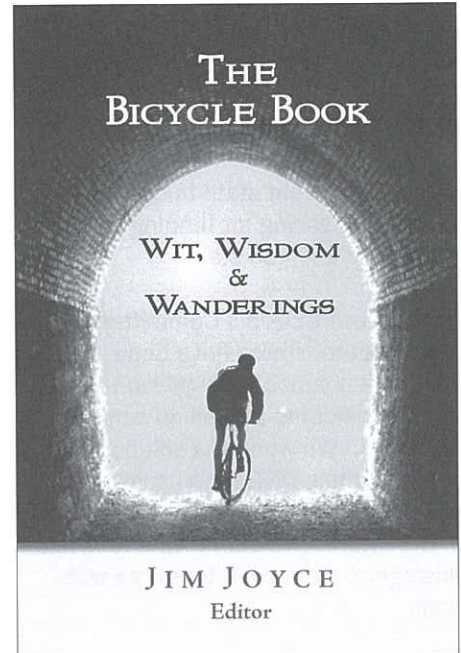


pounding and the hard work really shows. The Stony Creek Pump track stands to be one of the largest in the area. In addition to muscle, Tim Dunbar, Dan Durecki and Matt Dogh have spent hours designing and tweaking the course to flow just right.

We were also able to flag the rest of the park for the stunts that will be built in the spring. The new location has given us much better terrain to work with and we are very excited with the way the design has worked out. Keep your eyes on the MMBA forum and Metro North Chapter Website in the spring for build days.

Although the pump track is technically complete, the area is still off limits for riding. In the spring, we expect to be able to open the area to the public, utilizing a new kiosk funded by an REI grant.

Book Review



The Bicycle Book: Wit, Wisdom & Wanderings, is a new collection of articles and cartoons edited by James Joyce. No, not *that* James Joyce, we're actually talking Jim Joyce, the West Virginia teacher of the blind, sometimes author for *All About Beer Magazine* and editor of the online magazine *The Bike Exchange* (www.bikexchange.com).

Like his eclectic life, *The Bicycle Book* is a diverse text with material for roadies, mountain bikers, cruisers and save-the-world riders. Contributors include Michigan gag cartoonist Johnny Hawkins, Theresa Russell (no not *that* Theresa Russell, but cycle-tourist Theresa Russell who wrote *Bed, Breakfast & Bike Midwest*, featuring Michigan, Ohio and Indiana) as well as articles from free lance writers, a lawyer, a sports reporter, and many others. There are 35 different articles here ranging from *Magic Revisited at Woodstock* to *Keeping Up With Lance*.

This is not a how-to book, or a mountain biking book, a racing book or a bicycle maintenance book. The cadence is sometimes slow, sometimes fast. Like an epic ride, it is a book that provides many views—both panoramic and close up of various aspects of the

(Continued on page 20)

Stony Creek Fall Challenge

- Part I

By TJ Hill, bicycle aficionado

The first ever Stony Creek Fall Challenge came to be after hearing that CFC, the Columbus Fall Challenge had been cancelled. CFC a 210 mile two day very hilly tour in Southeast Ohio, that had been running continuously since 1976. Filling its tradition of tough hills would be no small task. Nonetheless I felt confident that there were enough hills on the unpaved roads in north Oakland and south Lapeer Counties to fill the bill.

The only problem I felt there would be was convincing a good many of the road bikers in southeast Michigan to get on their Mountain Bikes to experience just what the dirt roads had to offer in the way of a Fall Challenge.

I put the announcement up on the Wolverine yahoo list and got a good many inquiries but of those only one showed up on Saturday the 29th. That was Steve who came with his 14 year old son. I looked at Evan, moderately tall, just right slim and to my eyes an ideal biker body. I felt he would have no trouble. If there was any potential trouble I felt that he might get bored riding at my pace.

I was somewhat surprised and quite pleased when we had a starting pack of 10 riders. Rick Jones I was sure of as he had ridden a similar 100 miler in June. Phil Saoud had ridden the SSS 125 Miler with me on June 23rd. Dave Komendera was there though I had heard he was time restricted on that day. Steve Angst was a surprise starter as he had not ridden with us in recent memory. Mary Ward, someone I met at the Alabama Bike Camp this year showed up with a Cross Bike. I had experienced how tough she was in March so I had no doubt about her ability to handle the distance or the hills. Steve Whitty was no stranger that I knew was up to the task. Steve and his Son Evan were the only ones I had no prior knowl-

edge of. Steve assured me he was familiar with the territory and if need be he could call his wife for a rescue mission.

Since I didn't know the number of starters I might have I didn't bother to make up Que Sheets or maps to pass out. I suggested that anyone who wasn't going to stay with me have a Metro Park Map on which all the roads we would ride are thereon. No one seemed concerned so off we went. We headed West over the trail from Stony Creek West Branch Lot B. We got started a few minutes after 8 AM. The temperature was around 60 when we started. It was a bit nippy but bearable. I was wearing a short sleeved jersey, arm warmers, a wind vest as well as glove liners under my bike gloves. The nippy feeling lasted only a few miles before my body accepted the condition as the temperature gradually rose conditions were ideal for an arduous experience.

It is 1.3 Miles on the wide track trail west and south to the first hole in the fence where we exited the park onto Sheldon road and headed north. Since passing thru the hole in the fence tends to string out the group once on Sheldon I hesitated before having a count off, 1 thru 10 and then we were off together. The first trick for getting the mileage right is to turn right east at Snell. We descended at high speed as we crossed the Stony Creek Bridge then shot up the east embankment on momentum then continued along the fence line till we reached Millers Crossing. We passed over the paved subdivision roads for a half mile till we reached Gunn Road where we went west.

This so called trick added 2 miles to the course so that when we reached the City of Ortonville we would have covered 34 Miles or so I hopped. Before we reached Ortonville we would pass thru Lake Orion and along the south and west portions of that lake. We would take Indianwood west for 0.7 miles from Joslyn then return to dirt at Neuman. Stanton would then lead us west for several miles before we began stair stepping south and west to the north boundary of Independence Oaks County Park. On Hadley Road we cross M-



TJ on Delano Hill

15 after which we are on Ratalee Lake Road. After another mile or so heading west we begin stair stepping north and west until we cross M-15 just south of the Ortonville City Limit sign.

As we started heading north on the bike path we were faced with road construction that included a section of the bike path. I cut across some grass in front of a bank hopping to bypass the power shovel but that way was effectively blocked. Someone then pointed out that the flagman was waving us into the street. He stopped traffic allowing us a free passage to the north end of the construction zone.

We went right on South Street that leads to Downtown Ortonville, such as it is, moderate in size. At Mill we went right toward Church Street. At that intersection Dave dot Kom, Steve Angst and Phil Saoud cut off as they were time restrained. They had covered 37 Miles when they cut off. I gave Dave directions to get back to familiar territory.

As we headed north on Church Street we were down to a Seven Pack. We jiggled over to Sand Road then headed north into the Ortonville State Recreation Area where the real test would begin. After turning off Sawmill Lake Road we headed north for a mile on Honert Road. Ahead a large Road sign Arrow indicated a Right turn. I called out left

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Chapter Chatter

Holly/Flint Chapter Report

At both the Ruby Trail and Holdridge Lakes trail systems, the Holly/Flint chapter had great success with big plans for 2008. It's a year that will hopefully see a revitalization of the connection between the Ruby and Holdridge groups.

Ruby Trail- The Ruby Trail crew hopes to build on the smash success of their '07 race (170 racers, 200 spectators) with an even more family-friendly festival atmosphere this year. Plans are under-way for live music all day and after the race, videos will be projected on the big screen in the evening. Put this weekend on your calendar and bring the family to cheer you on while you hammer. The Ruby folks will also host a Charity Trail Run this year with 5 and 10-mile distances. Great things are happening at Ruby Trail!

Trail Coordinator Mike Liagre reports that the trail is in good shape with plans to armor and restructure some of the big downhill sections. See the Team Sandbag site (teamsandbag.com) for more details on trail days, race dates, and more.

Holdridge- Thanks to our Holly Recreation Unit Manager, Shawn Speaker, the Wilderness Trail (see the trail guide) is now open to mountain bikes. This fast, flowing trail boasts some big hills yet has good sight lines that allow two-way traffic. Think West Loop, but in a more open, mature forest. The Holdridge crew is working with Mr. Speaker to create an inaugural chapter benefit race for '08 to be held on this excellent addition to our trail system. Speaking of races, the Gruber's time trial will be held again for its third year on the illustrious Holdridge 15.5 mile East Loop.

Trail Coordinator Jeff Colombo reports that after significant work on the West Loop the last two years, including the Wall reroutes (yes, you can still do laps on the Wall!), new water crossings and drainage improvements, and some sweet new technical features, a lot

more energy will go toward maintenance and improvements on the East Loop (aka Gruber's). If you want to be part of good changes at Holdridge, come out to a trail day or contact Jeff or myself.

Josh McCreedy

Metro North Chapter Update

<http://metronorth.mmba.org>

-Nick Shue, Chapter President

The Trail Coordinators at Addison Oaks (Chris Werth, Paul Bailey and Steve Kinley) have been working with the park on additions to the trail that will complete the single track loop around the park, and perhaps even add some mileage. They have already done some scouting on the route for the additional trail, along with some willing volunteers. Some more scouting meetings are planned, which will include personnel from the park, to settle on a final route, with the new trail possibly being built in the spring. When trail days are planned, we will update the chapter website and post on the MMBA forums, so keep your eyes open announcements.

Discussions are continuing, but look for possible other news regarding Addison Oaks and the Metro North chapter in the coming months!

Work on the Stony Skills Park has halted with the winter weather, but work will restart in the spring. More news on the skills park elsewhere in the issue.

Tom Payn and Kristhal Portugal have both volunteered to represent the Metro North chapter in the CPS committee next year. I will be stepping down from the committee by the end of the year. If you have ANY questions or comments about the MMBA CPS Race Series, Tom and Kristhal are the people to talk to. Many thanks to them for volunteering their time.

While we are on the subject of volun-

teers, if anybody would like to volunteer as a Trail Coordinator for any of the chapter trails, feel free to drop me a note. Both Addison Oaks and Stony Creek have multiple TCs at this time, so we have them covered, but I'm sure that the TCs of the other trails (PLRA, Bloomer, Orion Oaks, Bald Mountain) would be more than happy to have someone help share the load.

And on a final note, our next meeting will be at Rochester Mills Brewery on January 22nd at 6:30PM. We will be having the chapter elections at that time, so please attend if you can.

Metro South Chapter Goings On...

By Joe (Hockeydaddy) Foy
President
Metro South Chapter.

I would like to thank all that attend our chapter meetings and hope more choose to attend in the future for this is the only real way you chapter officers know what you expect of us and what direction you would like the chapter to go in.

We, (the Metro South Chapter Board) are meeting monthly to hash around ideas and to keep each other informed on things involving our chapter and to be better prepared for our quarterly meetings to keep you all better informed at the meetings.

These are the minutes from the Metro South Chapter Meeting on 11/05/07. If you were unable to attend please take advantage of the fine job your Secretary, Claudia Bean is doing for us all by reading the minutes of the meeting to keep you informed of the info that was shared at the meeting. Please try and join us at our next meeting on Wed, Feb 6th, 2008.

MMBA Meeting 11/5/07

Station 885 Plymouth 6:30

Attendance

Justin Applegate

Frank Bean
 Claudia Bean
 Rick Bowling
 John Burt
 Cheryl Butler
 Dave Cox
 Mike Flack
 Joe Foy
 Bill Herman
 Loren Konkus
 Hans Nyberg
 Jeff Oles
 Carlos Ramirez
 Scott Silvers
 Bob Spleet
 Brian Thomas

Approval of Minutes

General updates on trails, TC, trail days and activities

Hickory Glen/Commerce- Co-TC- Justin Applegate/James Altman – Bandit stuff being tackled. Kiosk is approved- recommended to city council. REI logo on kiosk is issue. Size of logo. SP08 installation after final city council approval. Will follow up with city council.

Highland- Bob Sleet- update maps and mileage signs. Mileage markers proposed every ½ mile, emergency plan in the works with Fire and Rescue. GPS will help. A loop started. Kiosk update- not spoken to city yet. Can take extra one. Fixed downhill in A loop.

Hines Park- Mike Flack- fun trail, technical, education about erosion and ruts with city and other groups being discussed. Dog park section may be good- 1-2 miles already there, another 2 miles possible. Education on how MMBA improves the trail. Wayne County has replaced two bridges. Others out. Muddy in spring, as it is near Hines but rest of season OK.

ILRA- John Burt- Met with area planner to look at reroute on Blue. Approved. Trail day planned in spring. 250-300 yard bench cut. Kiosk approved- location- possibly by two trail heads or by other areas- latrines and other kiosk.

Lakeshore Park/Novi- Dave Cox – Good shape. More on trail directional signage

in spring. BBBB \$ 760.00 raised for chapter. Emergency Plan in the works for Novi- zones and maps for emergency crew. Lila Lazarus rode with us! Race possibly July 12 or 13 or later in month. Based on race schedules that are out thus far. Date to be set soon.

Maybury- Dave Poirer- Winter Riding set. Race may be time trial in 2008 and having a different route. New markers in every ½ mile. Maps for fire and safety to be done and given to city rescue operation. Dec. 15- April 15th, park at Beck Road. Kiosks assigned and area set.

Milford- Bill Herman- Good shape- some reroutes to add distance. It is well ridden. Locals enjoy it; they bike in, not drive. Milford Challenge. June 7th. Tentative date. Bike path to be put through the trails.

Munson- Scott Goocher- no report

Proud Lake- Bill Herman- New management is good. Park has no master plan right now, struggling to make \$. Wants to do some reroutes. Needs more riders to get presence. Access points is an issue. Wixom Road entrance suggested as it has a visible parking lot. Regular trail nights or events suggested to increase visibility.

Rouge Park- trail will be abandoned. \$4500.00 slated. Little used for park trail days. Few riders. Want to use \$ for other projects. Possibly use it for other trails in chapter.

Freeride Committee- Barf at Farm- Matt wants to do one next summer. MMBA Day at Ray's this winter proposed. Mondays is group day, but every weekend day it is huge. Local deals with Holiday Inn.

Chapter events for /fall/winter 2007-

MTB 101 Clinic(Trail Committee) Dave Cox and Mike Flack. Proud Lake or ILRA possible places.

Web Site- Does anyone look at it? Who is updating it. Frank will. Meeting minutes and next meeting will be posted.

Promote MMBA- WCXZ radio, Fox news TV, Hines Lights Bike Ride Nov. 14th MMBA sponsor, Trails Edge and BTT. WRIF Men's Expo- none this year. Motorcycle expo and Health Expos are possible ideas. State MMBA should fund the efforts, not chapter. Need more follow up and results from radio and MMBA. Possible newspaper ads for BBBB and other events.

FAFL- Updates TBA.

Financial Report-

Balance as of 7-1-07 \$7866.55
 Income

1. Qtrly payments from MMBA
 - a. July \$122.40
 - b. Sept. \$111.60
 2. Maybury Race \$8028.00
 3. Milford race \$285.00
 4. Novi Tree Farm ?
 5. Check not picked up at race \$40
- Expenses
1. Maybury race \$5134.45
- Balance as of 11-5-07 \$11,319.10

Other items- Kiosks- have to be in by SP08- report needs to be in to REI.

Laminated MMBA promotional business cards- Claudia will look into that.

New location- What do we think of Station 885? Station 885 is OK.

Nominations-

Current Board is willing to stay. Serving on team- two year elections discussed- decided against it.

BBBB in 2008 - Agreed with Metro North to be there in 2008. Metro South will have a season opener in SP08.

Kudos to Hans- BRB is great!

February is next meeting- change date? How about Thursdays or Wednesdays.

Next meeting- Wed. Feb 6th.

Elected officials will meet monthly. 11/28 first meeting.

Frank is South Chapter Board liaison to State Board.

Respectfully submitted,

Claudia Bean, AKA Froggyrider

Mid-state Chapter News

The Mid-state Chapter held a meeting and group ride in September at Bennett Park in Charlotte. Twelve members attended the meeting and elected Jake Pangle as returning President and Chris Mensing as the new Vice President. Jake will also remain as the chapter Treasure and Chris is our current Board Representative. At the time of the meeting the Secretary position and CPS Representative was left open. Brad Potter and Gregg Iddings accepted the positions at a later date.

The first stage of trail building at Bennett Park has been completed with a total of 7.5 miles of twisty single track. This trail is a welcome addition, particularly to Mid-staters looking for a winter riding destination. Trail improvements and maintenance are continuing under the guidance of the new trail coordinator David Frost.

There has been some rogue building at Burchfield Park. Whoever is creating new lines and adding new features (jumps) we ask them to please stop!!! The mid-state chapter has an excellent working relationship with Ingham County Parks and we would like to not ruin that based on rogue building at the park. There have been some recent additions over the last year and not all of them are up to the building standards of the park. The latest edition is a jump that was placed in Annie's Playhouse. Early in the spring there were several reroutes added to sections of the trail that made no sense. Someone has also been moving some of the ground ladders to make additional stunts. As part of our agreement with the park, the TC checks all of the trail features once a month and has to fill out paperwork to prove it. If someone is putting in random unapproved features this puts us at risk of losing what we have. If you would like to help with building or have suggestions for the

current trail we would be more than happy to hear your concerns. Just don't take building into your own hands!!!

If you would like to build stunts legitimately here is your chance. Ingham County Parks would like to continue discussions about the proposed Bushwood section at Burchfield. The park is closed (starting December 1) to winter riding creating an opportunity for structure maintenance / building. Volunteering this winter will give riders a chance to provide their input into structure design. The trail coordinator, "Zak," is looking for those to help lead projects.

Several Mid-state members attended a meeting discussing the beginning of mountain bike use in Waterloo Recreation area. Stay tuned to www.mmba.org for continue details to help support this possible trail. The chapter continues to scout new areas for trail construction and discussion with land managers has begun for possible freeride trails at Legg Park in Meridian Township.

The chapter is putting together a race team for the upcoming season. The team will be open to current Mid-state members only and will encourage a fun atmosphere at races. Thanks to Revolution Bikes for their sponsorship! Contact Jake or check the Mid-state message board for additional information.

Go to the Mid-state website at www.onfal.com to order your chapter t-shirt or hooded sweatshirt and to find information on chapter events and trail maintenance days. A new chapter leaf blower will speed up the trail clearing processing leaving more time for trail improvements...so come out and help this spring.

Poto Chapter Update

Thank you to everyone who came to our Trail School 101-102 session at Sharon Hollow Park. This was a great opportunity as Sharon Hollow is a blank slate with no existing trails. Also, we discovered a seemingly endless supply of awesome field stones which we used to create crib walls on the sown slope side of our bench cuts. We couldn't have

asked for a better technical trail building session.

Exciting things are happening at Rolling Hills Park in Ypsilanti. After meeting with the folks at Washtenaw County it is clear that we have a top notch new trail coming to MI. As it's name suggests, the park has some awesome topography. And to make things even better, a new land acquisition that includes an old gravel pit has put us in the position of helping decide how the area should be re-graded. To maximize the fun factor of course. This park is less than a mile away from Hewen's Creek, and there is the possibility of a singletrack connector. That's right, if the two parks were linked we are talking about a 30 plus mile loop.

We will be holding a bash of a fundraiser in late February to raise money for additional tools for the Chapter. It's too early to officially let the cat out of the bag, but let's just say that it involves beer, an awesome location, a film that many of you have been wanting to see, and some other great things. Check out the brand new Poto Chapter website for more information. You can find the link on the main page of www.mmba.org

Western Chapter

The IMBA Trail Care Crew and the Trek Fit for Women Tour were in Grand Rapids last October for a weekend of club and trail building. In addition to the Western Chapter, we had people from NIMBA, Uncle Jimmie, Mid-State Chapter, Poto Chapter, as well as folks from other non-mountain biking clubs in attendance.

Jason and Anna did site visits and trail assessments at Yankee Springs and the Cannonsburg Ski Area.

A new section was flagged and partially completed during the trailschool. It's difficult to describe, we ended up with a corkscrew downhill complete with banked turns at no more than 5% grade. It's something to see and ride. And I trust the section will be with us with minimal maintenance for years.

The Halloween costume party was a blast. After wondering if anyone one would show up- I was surprised to see

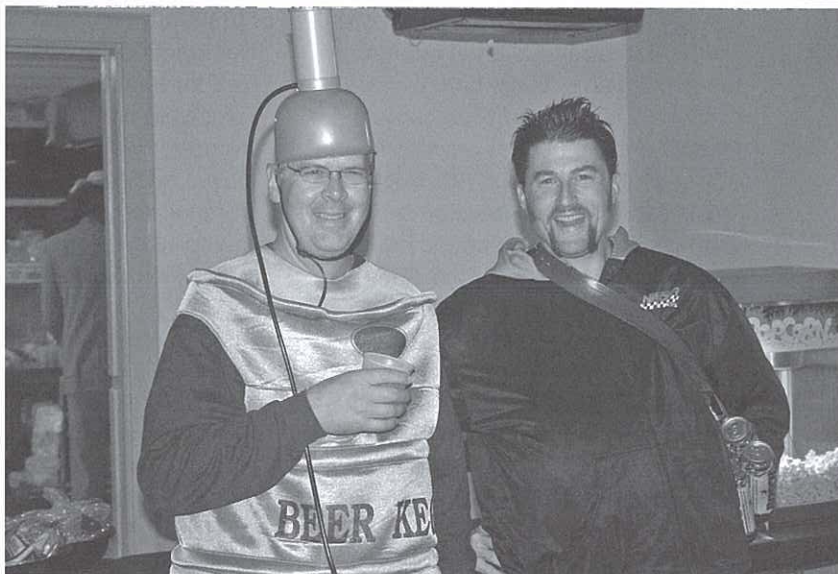
so many great costumes. Unlike myself- it was evident that most people put more than 10 minutes at Meijers picking out a costume from the bargain bin.

The kidney fight with the band isn't something you get to do every day. Rarely have so many people commented on how much fun they had and what they want to do next year. Maybe this becomes an annual event?

Thanks to everyone that attended throughout the weekend.

All photos by Jeremy Anderson

Western Chapter Photos



Seasons Greetings from the Great Southwest

By Mike Needham

Let me begin with some information originally intended for the fall issue. Perhaps you can insert this in your permanent memory and pass it on verbally to those in need. If you are like most of us, it might be better if you clip this and save it near your note pad in in your lavatory. The lesson is poison ivy. We need to know three things, prevention, treatment, and prevention.

The toxin is a chemical known by the Japanese word *urushiol* (ooo' roo shi awl') $C_{21}H_{18}O_2$. The toxin is contained in a resinous sap from the Cambrian layer and the leaves. This means that root stalk and leaf are all toxic. Without its' leaves poison ivy is still dangerous and can affect you at any time of the year. Say you rest your glove on a tree with a vine attached and then touch your skin with the glove. Got it!

Perhaps you know someone who doesn't get poison ivy or maybe you've heard someone boast, "I can touch it and I never get it". Well, it's not bragging if you can back it up. My advice, don't experiment just for the sake of argument. People like these have not yet reached their own personal TVL.

It goes like this. You are exposed or contact urisoliol. Your *threshold value limit* is not exceeded and your resistance increases. Every time you are exposed your resistance becomes greater until you either develop immunity or you exceed your TVL. Once your TVL is exceeded you develop sensitivity. The first time may not be too bad but the second could be serious and require emergency medical care.

Let's talk now about prevention. Learn how to identify the plant in all seasons. Poison ivy grows as a seedling with a small stem and as few as three leaves. Many other plants have tree leaves and careful study is in order. One unique characteristic of the newest leaves is the center leaf is symmetrical and the

outer leaves are not. The outer leaves are notched like the center leaf on only one side. This plant has no thorns and never has green stems on the leaves. These plants can easily be pulled from the ground if you wear a protective disposable glove.

Stage two prevention. The plant has survived a few years and become a woody vine. Without a host to climb it might stand a yard or so sometimes twisting with another poison ivy plant. This is a rather unique characteristic and even without leaves becomes an identifiable trait of poison ivy. Avoid if possible. Plants this size can wrap around your shins and deliver plenty of toxin. These plants are hearty and hard to control, use herbicides during the growing months.

Stage three prevention from mature vines. Vines can reach a four inch diameter and climb eighty foot trees. All vines hugging trees should be considered potent and dangerous until identified. One unique characteristic of poison ivy of this age is the way that branches will grow from the main stalk horizontally about a yard off the trunk. These branches and others nearer the top may have white berries on them. The berries are eaten by birds and dropped all over the countryside. If your yard keeps breaking out in poison ivy, find the source of seed and eradicate it. Within the first foot of the vine slip a shield between the tree and vine the chop the vine in two with hatchet or ax. Remnants of the vine will cling to the tree for about four years. If the vine refuses to die it is getting nourishment from the tree. Put on the disposable gloves and pull the major vine away from the tree. This will cut down the proliferation of poison ivy and your tree might thank you as well.

Enough prevention for now, let's talk treatment. You just broke out in an itchy rash and there are no life threatening symptoms such as blocked breathing passages or eyes swollen shut. Urisoliol is like sticky tree pitch and is hard to wash off. Let's get that nasty clinging urisoliol off of you. It seems like every one has advice on this subject and some

merit is possible in all of it. Let give you the gist of it. Soaking in a chlorinated pool or hot tub will help. Putting chlorine bleach straight from the bottle could harm you. Washing with very hot tap water can trigger your reaction and spread the toxin. Gasoline, naphtha, and alcohol should be avoided because of the flammability and the danger of skin damage and the possibility of getting into your blood stream. Hydrocortisone is high on the list of over the counter drug treatments and again has some merit. Hydrocortisone will reduce the itch, period, nothing else. Benedryl is an antihistamine, and will help greatly if you get to the awful blister stage. Be careful though, Benedryl can put some people into deep sleep in less than an hour. A product is available called Zanafel. My only fault with this product is its price, \$35.00 per ounce. If you have a wheel borrow full of cash and your local drug store is closer than the bank, get yourself some.

If you are like me and all your money is for exotic bike, ski, hunting, or fishing vacations, take this advice. Go to your hardware, automotive, grocery, or dollar store and buy Fast Orange hand cleaner by Permatex. The cost is about twelve cents per ounce at the dollar store. Wash twice per day when you first itch or use if you think you were exposed as soon as possible. You can also use it for grimy hands from working on your bike. This stuff works as well as Fells Naphtha soap, which is darned hard to find these days. And is more effective than the ever popular dish detergent.

Time to discredit a myth. While you may get a reaction by transfer from pets or contaminated clothing, you cannot spread the reaction by contact with the ooze from your blisters. The ooze is your own histamines from white blood cells. Blisters can be reduced with the use of antihistamines.

Enough of treatment, let's talk step three, prevention. Earlier discussion dealt with identification and abstention. What if you ride fast and furious and you can't take time for plant identification. Damn the hazard! I came to ride!

Well you can prevent this as well. If you aren't one of the lucky few that can grow a thick mat of gorilla hair on your arms and legs, check this out. You can buy lotions that will protect your bare skin. I have a product called Ivy Block. Twelve bucks for four ounces. Try using the thick and gooey sunscreen. I use the waterproof kind. The most obvious form of prevention of course would be clothing. There's nothing better than a long sleeve jersey and black tights on a humid 98 degree day. Ouch! I just had a mental picture of gorilla fur matted under panty hose, not pretty.

So let's review the three steps.

Prevention: Don't touch the stuff to begin with.

Treatment: Scrub soon after exposure, but not with harsh solvents.

Prevention: Protect you skin before exposure with lotions or clothing. Check your calendar for chapter events this winter. Our chapter has the 2007th annual New Year's Day ride for instance. Learning to dress for winter physical activity should take years of experimentation. Here is a basic rule. If you are warm and toasty before exercise or your hand or feet feel wet, dress down. When you get moving these should warm up on their own. I'll share my revelations with you. A cheap pair of fleece gloves works great above 15 degrees. Buy a pair of shoes that do not have vent panels and get them one metric size large for you socks. I use an inner sock of thin polypropylene and outer thick sock that is 70 plus percent Marino wool. I tried booties but I can ruin them in a single ride. Besides, booties do nothing for bottom of your foot. If you step on ice and you can feel the cold conducting up through your cleat to the ball of your foot, try this. Remove your shoe liner and make something similar out of aluminum foil. Place this in your shoe first and then replace the original liner. If you still feel the cold down there, add a felt or cork layer as well.

Have a happy new year and join us for the Fort Custer Stampede this spring.

Three Guys

- Part III

By Jeff Adamcik

We started east of Boyne Falls today at the corner of Thumb Lake and Slashing Road. I have ridden it a few times and this was by far the best shape that part of the trail has been in. The section is a nice mix of single track and two track and goes for about 14 miles to Harmon Road.

Shortly into it, there is a nice 7/10 of a mile climb known as Chandler Hill. It has a few tough spots that make it a challenge. The trail then follows a scenic stream for a few hundreds yards then you have to cross it by hopping some rocks.

It's easy to get sidetracked on this trail and it riding it a few times to really know it. The finish is a downhill that follows along a fence (there may be a few cows watching) which takes you to Harmon Road. At that point, Greg Hintz met up with us to help guide the way.

After a few short road sections we hit a very vertical, tight switchback that reminded me of the riding in Ishpeming. After about 5 miles, we mainly hit roads that took us into Petoskey. By the State Park, we stop for lunch and had a few great bagel sandwiches, well I had two.

The second part of our day started off on the famous Kipp Road section. Also known as Trail Head #1 on the Harbor Springs Chapter trail map. Trail Head

#4 to #5 has always been my favorite until they clear cut parts of it this past year.

The ride was going well until we got to Wycamp Lake area. We came across a sign that said "Trail Closed Bald Eagles Mating".

Understand that we were out in middle of nowhere and if you came upon this sign what would you do? So decided on what to do while sitting there for a few minutes break. Well, some official came walking out from the trail and gave us directions on how to get around the area. Of course he sends us on a misguided adventure.

We eventually found a paved road and made it to Trail Head #7. I had not ridden this far north on the N.C.T. and what a treat the next 5 miles were. Incredible ascents and descents through scenic sand dunes. Even though not all was rideable, what a rush as it felt like we were riding in another country. It led into Wilderness State Park where there was a mix of extremely technical and long straight mosquito infested sections.

Because of time, we decided to bypass the last 5 miles of trail and took to the road to get to Mackinaw City.

Thanks to Chris Maltby and Mike Seeman for taking on this 3 day, 300+ mile adventure with me. It is amazing to see all that God has created and allows us to do.

Mid-State Chapter Poker Run

The MidState Chapter is pleased to announce our new race team. Revolution Bikes in East Lansing is our title sponsor. MSU sports and fitness has also agreed to sponsor the team. Watch for us at all of the MMBA CPS races in 2008.

MidState Chapter hoodie sweatshirts are now available for \$35 each. We also have 16oz bar glasses available for \$5 each.

We will be holding a mountain bike poker run **May 10, 2008** at Bennett Park in Charlotte. This is a chapter benefit event to raise money for trail equipment, signage, etc... Food and drinks will be provided.

Prizes will be available from: Park Tools, Canari, Go Pro Camera, Hoss MTB, Santa Cruz, and more

Additional information will be posted on mmba.org, midstate.wordpress.org, and onfal.com

Pedaling through paradise on smooth black top bike lanes
stretching on forever

Bill boards and cement overpass graffiti blur,
buy one Get one,
jesus Saves,
vote for some suit with his paisley tie
waving like a flag in the tailwind pushing me home

I dream of these speeding cars,
salty sweat,
red lights turning green,
Pedal and breath

- Dan Frayer



MMBA Gets Into The Christmas Spirit

By:Joe Foy

Every Christmas season Wayne County Parks puts up a Christmas light display in Hines Park. It's a 6 mile drive through it and it's only open to cars in which they charge \$5. The day before the grand opening they have a "Run/Walk" event so folks can get a more up close look at the lights.

So for the last couple years I had been in contact with the Wayne County Parks System to see if they would allow bikes to join the walker/runners in the event. I received many replies saying that the liability issue was too great with the mixture of the 2 groups. I never gave up and finally last year they said they would like to give it a chance. But it was just a month before the event and we weren't able to work out all the details.

This year we were able to get it all worked out and had a separate "BIKE NIGHT" for the Hines Festival of Lights.

The MMBA joined forces with Andy Staub from Beat the Train-Detroit to supply a "sweeper squad" to aid any biker that had a problem. Mike Flack of Trails Edge Bike Shop in Plymouth supplied the SAG Wagon for the event. It was held the day after the "Run/Walk" and it was a great success. We had about 200 + riders with their bikes all decorated in tinsel and lights. There was a contest for the best dressed bike and the winner won a gift certificate from Trails Edge Bike Shop in Plymouth.

Wayne County Parks was very excited and happy with how the event turned out and is excited to make it a regular edition to the light festival. This would not have happened without the cooperation of Kim Healy, of the Wayne County Parks and all the great volunteers from the M.M.B.A Beat the Train, Team Tree Farm, and Trails Edge. We are all ready in the planning stages for next year's event which promises to be bigger and better.



Photo by Hans Nyberg—Ten Mile Media

An Excellent Adventure

by Gary Anderson - Poto Chapter

I wanted to share with all of you one of my best biking adventures this past summer. Every year I organize a mountain bike trip up North that includes a few good riding buddies, some beer, great music and making it up to the U.P., usually the Munising area in particular.

I had two precious weeks off work this past July and decided to spend it up North. I spent the first week with the family at a nice cabin that we rented from a co-worker in the Forest Lakes development in Alger (just south of West Branch). We did the usual stuff, tubing down the river, shopping, relaxing at the beach, fishing with the kids and I even built a small twisty hiking trail on their property while I was collecting dead fall branches for bonfires during the week, it turned out really cool, hope they like it.

Of course I brought my Superlight with me so I fit in a ride at a wonderful little gem of a trail, Lost Twin Lakes in Houghton Lake. It's only three miles long, but it's a really fun ride within an old growth forest with an abundance of tangled pine tree roots, small wooden bridges and a really fun downhill at the end (if you're going clockwise). I usually ride it in both directions for full effect, a really enjoyable trail, look in the trail guide for directions to it. Later that same week I rode the Ogemaw Hills Pathway trails in West Branch which for some reason kind of bored me this year, maybe it was a been there, done that sort of thing because it didn't offer me enough of a challenge. A bike ride in the woods is never a bad thing however and I enjoyed my time there. When I stopped to eat a sandwich that I had brought in, at one of the trail side benches, a big deer came strolling out into the clearing in front of me. Cool. My family noted how much I stunk upon picking me up at the trail-head. Sorry.

I had planned to have my good riding buddy Tommy meet me the last Sunday at the cabin loaded up and ready to keep going. We headed Northeast to Manistee where we experienced the Big M trail for the first time. It reminded me a lot of the North Country Trail, big rolling hills with deep sand at the bottoms. One of those spots caught me and slammed me to the ground. Thanks for the sore shoulder and bloody temple stupid sand! We explored all of the interior singletrack and then rode about half of the outside trail. Great fun and what a gorgeous panoramic view at the top of the hill with the old ski lift base. Nice. I'll be back.

Tommy had an idea to bring the road bikes along on this trip as well to ride a road between Harbor Springs and Cross Village, M119. He had driven on it in years past and thought it would be a great road to ride bikes on. We parked the fully packed Sienna magic van at a country club parking lot just outside of downtown, suited up and hit the road. Tommy got an instant front flat about a mile in and we stopped to repair it on this perfect sunny Michigan afternoon.

This epic road ride got much better once we got going again. There is no center line on this road and not much of a shoulder, but the traffic was sparse and the views of Lake Michigan along with the shoreline cottages spectacular! I was really glad that I had brought my carbon road bike with a triple crank because there were some serious hills which forced me into my granny gear on several occasions. Going up always means going back down on these big rollers and the downhills were long and fast with speeds up to 35+mph. (grinning all the way). About halfway through, the famed "tunnel of trees", it's just a blur going North and quite a bit slower on the way back up.

It was 20 miles to Cross village as we turned around and headed back to enjoy this road again, stopping at a small country store to fill up on sweet, ice cold Gatorade. I enjoyed this ride immensely, it reminded me a lot of a ride I had done on the Foothills Pathway near Gatlinburg, Tennessee because of the long

steep climbs/decents, and spectacular views. Everyone that is reading this right now should ride this on either a road or mountain bike, it is one of the coolest (albeit difficult) rides in this state, I want to do it again for sure.

From there our next destination was Tahquamenon Falls which were down to a mere trickle of their normal selves and we missed that big forest fire by just days. The next stop was beautiful Munising to ride the always blissful and ultra scenic Bruno's Run trail. We stayed at the new Holiday Inn in town that's right on Lake Superior and I would highly recommend it. The staff was very friendly, the rooms clean & comfortable and the breakfast selection rocked.

I have written about this trail in past issues, but I feel the need to mention it again, if you haven't ridden this little Northern 10 mile gem of God's gift to singletrack that meanders past 7 unspoiled lakes, you need to at least once in your mountain biking life. It's best to visit it in July thru August when the temps are up and the bugs are down. We usually ride it in both directions for a great 20 mile ride, followed by ice cold Canadian beers, some pasties or smoked local fish and a refreshing swim in Pete's Lake. This year a huge Bald Eagle soared closely overhead as we swam and enjoyed the cool water's soothing effect.

I truly love this place and we often have this special trail to ourselves. It's just about 10 miles south of town on Forest Highway 13, park at Pete's Lake Campground and follow the little markers with a black bear on an orange circle. Make sure to stop by Muldoon's house of pasties while you're in town, we ate as many of these delicious babies that we could. Grand Island is also very worthy of a fun mountain bike experience, but don't attempt to do them both on same day, take the time and enjoy them individually.

Have fun,
(Santa Cruz)

“Extreme Lila” Rides The Farm at Night

By Joe (HockeyDaddy) Foy

After a couple of months of exchanging emails I was able to schedule local Fox2 News health reporter, Lila Lazarus, to do a ride at Novi's Lakeshore Park (Novi Tree Farm) with Team Tree Farm (www.teamtreefarm.com). By the time we started planning and the actual ride, the season had changed and now we were faced with Lila doing a night ride. Being this Lila's first time even on a mountain bike, let alone in the dark she was real excited in doing it.

We set it up for our next Tuesday night ride at the Farm and she brought a colleague visiting from Germany, Klaus, and a camera man for the shoot. We met at the trail head about an hour before the start of the ride so we could get them set up on the bikes and lights which were generously loaned to us that night by Trails Edge Bike Shop in Plymouth. Mike Flack, the owner of Trails Edge came personally to fit Lila & Klaus.

Lila had decided she wanted to tackle the whole 10 miles instead of an abbreviated ride. So Mike gave them a crash course on MTB 101 & Night Riding 101 and a quick review of what the camera man wanted for shots and we were on our way.

As soon as we hit the single track Lila's screams and laughter filled the woods. At every downhill, root, rock that Lila experienced she met it with a smile and laughter. Lila tackled the "Expert Loop" with little problem and came out just fine. Then she headed for "The Crater" and handled it like a pro, no air off the jump, but she did it anyway, all the while screaming!!!

As we continued the ride Lila kept screaming and laughing with every turn in the trail. We had to stop quite a few times for camera shots and sound bytes but everyone had a blast. During

one point a little first aid was needed for leg injury Klaus had due to a pedal bite but all turned out well. We finished the ride as we started it with Lila's laughter as she exited the trail. As she slowed her bike down she looked at us and screamed "I'm HOOKED!!!!".

Lila & her camera man finished their shooting and we invited Lila & to the local watering Hole, The Lakeview that we visit after each Tuesday Night Ride. Lila generously accepted. Once there we all had some dinner and some carb reloads, during all this we mentioned the upcoming "Iceman" race and Lila seemed quite interested in it. So we ended our night and Lila said she would let us know when it was going to air.

The next day I get an email from Lila begging me to hook her up for the Ice-man race. I replied that I would see what I could do and I proceeded to email, Steve Brown., the founder of the "Iceman Cometh" race. I explained to Steve of who Lila was and how psyched she was to experience the race first hand. Steve replied back that he would love to have Lila do the race and he lined it all up for her, BIG THANKS to Steve for coming through on such short notice.

Lila packed up and headed to Traverse City and signed in as a beginner racer and she knocked it out in 3:34, not bad for someone who was riding a mountain bike for just the second time in her life, you RAWK Lila!!!! She said she had a blast and all she remembers is being in a bus in front of a beer tent that night!!!

The exposure from the airing of the story on Fox2 news was great for the MMBA, Team Tree Farm and mountain biking in general will be great. Just after the airing we had a few new riders post up saying they saw the piece and has joined us on the Tuesday Night ride. If you are interested in seeing the piece just go to Fox2 News site (www.myfoxdetroit.com) and type in the search bar "Extreme Lila Archive". Then click on the Mountain bike clip and enjoy!!!

We would like to thank the City of Novi for letting us shoot this and for the great partnership we enjoy with them as we try to improve the trail in Novi for all to enjoy. We would most of all like to thank Lila and Fox2 news for coming out and sharing what we all know and that's mountain biking is a BLAST!!!

(Continued from page 10)

wonderful pastime of cycling. I don't think of it as a summer book. Nothing here will astonish or anger or challenge your views or otherwise get your heart rate up. Rather, it's a fun winter read for those days when the layers are hanging on the line and you've had your fill of bike porn and you just want to relax and take a look at your passion through the eyes of others.

Oh, and one terrific benefit of buying this book? The author is donating a portion of the proceeds to Solider Ride-a program for providing adaptive equipment to those who have been injured defending our country.

More at <http://www.woundedwarriorproject.org/>

Book Details:

The Bicycle Book: Wit, Widsom & Wanderings

Jim Joyce, Editor

Publisher: Satya House Publications
ISBN: 978-0-9729191-5-9

152 pages

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Publication Date: November 23, 2007

—Rick Bowling (risnewski)

turn and be prepared to go into granny chainring.

To the surprise of all save Rick Jones who had been here in June we faced possibly the steepest dirt road hill in southeast Michigan. There is a little moderate preliminary climb before the hill tilts up to its steepest section that tops out at 27%. The surface is knarley, and somewhat crowned. There are loose rocks along each side as well as in the middle. The middle seemed to be the best bet as if a rock caused your bike to skip on either side you might not be able to recover while in the middle you had a better chance to continue your upward climb. I believe only three, of the seven of us, made it to the summit without having to bail out and push.

At the summit we regrouped, took a break for a snack and to adjust our clothing covering. After a short break I suggested each rider give the one in front some space as the descent could be hairy if the surface was particularly strewn with loose rocks and eroded trenches. Fortunately the surface today was not particularly bad. We all made it to the next turn at Toady with no mishaps. We then looped Toady to Washburn then headed south for a mile. We were then along the Genesee County western border. At Fox Lake Road we turned left and headed east. For a half mile this is a regular road though the hill we faced was more than ordinary with a grade of 12%. Beyond the summit the road resumes its one lane nature as it begins a rather steep descent. Once again picking your line is essential as the surface is variable with high spots and ruts to negotiate.

We bottom out and relax for a time until we pass Tody then begin the eastbound climb. The climb is not anywhere as steep as the initial westbound climb but it is a good deal longer and it is plenty steep. Once again the pack reaches the summit at which point we make a right turn to head north on Padrock. This detour adds 2 miles to the overall distance and avoids a hairy descent.

We returned to Fox Lake Road where we were once again eastbound. This is

a normal wide road though there are still hills to be reckoned with. As we passed the horse camp I called for a left turn as there is a pump on a rise just inside the camp. I went over to the pump and began the pumping process. After about 12 strokes water began coming out of the spigot. Bikers began filling their water bottles and some splashed their face. Someone else took over the pumping duty then I splashed my face and then even took a sip of water, my first in 46 miles.

After a brief interlude we continued the ride eastbound. After crossing Hadley Road the road name becomes Big Fish Lake Road. The road basically heads east but with multiple north and south jiggles. As we entered the road I made the announcement that somewhere in the next mile there was a downhill right curve that if you failed to use the brakes on the easy part of the initial downhill you would be thrown across the road to the opposite side as we had experienced in the distant past.

The pack then followed my lead and all made it thru the curve on the right side of the road. Big Fish Lake tees into Connell where we turn left. The road makes a 90 degree curve and becomes Davison Lake Road. At the second block, Sinrol we turn left and go about a half mile. The regular road ends at which point we turn left onto an RV track that I call the Sinrol-Deihl Trail. This trail is just One Mile in length but it seems much longer due to the variable terrain. There are ruts of considerable depth. There are water bogs but many fewer than in a year of normal rainfall. There are steep climbs and steep descents. There is a single track detour around a swamp. We were all careful during the crossing and all made it without incident. That was a relief to me as a few weeks back I made a wrong turn on this trail and took the group on a wild goose chase before we backtracked to the proper trail.

From that point on I tried to estimate the distance to lunch in Metamora to placate those who inquired, "where's Lunch." I gave the estimate as 8 miles though I said it emphatically as if I knew

for sure that was the distance. Everyone made it to lunch at the Sundance Restaurant in Metamora in good shape seemingly. We had covered 61.37 miles to that point. Hopefully everyone ate enough to sustain them for the 40 miles to come.

Now then I was doing this course out of my head and had not plotted out the course thus coming in with exactly 100 miles was going to be a challenge. I did have a pretty good idea of what to do to come in with the requisite mileage. We returned to hilly Calley where we went west to Baldwin then headed north to Sutton before heading east. We continued east to Thornville then dropped down a mile to Hollow Corners where I was fairly confident of how far to go east before heading south toward Stony Creek.

I watched the mileage on my GPS and decided that turning south on Bishop would likely do the trick to come in with 100 miles. Bishop is the Lapeer equivalent to Dequindre though the two do not meet by 1.5 miles as Dequindre ends at the equivalent of 36.5 Mile Road and Bishop picks up at 38 Mile Road equivalent.

We did all the wiggles and jiggles necessary to stay on dirt roads and get us back to Stony Creek. We returned to Sheldon Road and headed south to the hole in the fence where we had emerged at shortly after 8 AM. As we passed thru the fence we turned over 100 Miles and thus we came in with 101.3 Miles for the day and the first day of SCFC was history. I don't want to miss mentioning that Evan, Steve's Son is 14 years of age and had never before ridden further than 50 Miles. Congratulations were in order for the entire pack for a job, "Well Done." The finishers included, Rick Jones, Mark Bedard, Mary Ward, Steve Whitty, Steve and Evan whose last name I failed to get and last but not least TJ Hill.

Until I get around to writing stage two of the SCFC may all your days be happy and your trails exhilarating.

[Read part 2 in the Spring 2008 BRB](#)

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(Beginner, Sport, Expert, Elite, SS, Clyde)

The International Mountain Bicycling Association (IMBA) consistently ranks Michigan as one of the top states and the MMBA and our volunteers are big reasons why.

The MMBA works to improve access to existing trail systems, helps maintain over 500 miles of trails all across the state, and works with land managers and elected officials to promote responsible mountain biking in Michigan.

The MMBA is on the Citizen's Committee for Michigan State Parks which is working to find a sustainable, long-term financial solution to preserve our parks. The DNR Parks budget is approaching bankruptcy in 2008 and without a new long-term funding strategy some of our State Parks could be closed or even sold.

The MMBA vigilantly works to keep the North Country Trail multi-use as originally envisioned by Congress and to maintain our current access to hundreds of trail miles within Michigan. It's no secret: the North Country Trail Association and National Park Service are actively working to ban mountain biking from

North Country Trail.

The MMBA rewards volunteers who put their time and sweat into making Michigan trails great. With rising demand for trails and deepening cuts in park funding, it's more important than ever that we encourage and recognize the volunteers that make our trails great.

The MMBA/REI Trail School is training Michigan's finest trail builders. Our trail school teaches trail coordinators and land managers the principals of sustainable trail design and work crew management.

Your membership helps us continue our work to open and maintain trails with a stronger voice in Lansing and Washington D.C.

Sincerely:
MMBA Membership
membership@mmba.org



Michigan Mountain Biking Association

Bent Rim Bugle

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